The Congregationalist

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In This Midsummer Issue:

"THE PHILADELPHIA MEETINGS"
An Editorial Report

"What Can A No-Voting Church Do?"

"Fellowship For Continuing Churches"

AUG 11 1961
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VOLUME 4 **AUGUST, 1961** **NUMBER 7**

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." — Galatians 5:1

A SURPRISE — AND A "BONUS"

Readers of THE CONGREGATIONALIST who noticed in the June issue that there would be no more until September will be surprised to receive this August number. The decision to publish it came as a result of the generosity of a layman in Hartford, Connecticut, who believed that the cause of Congregationalism might profit by having the paper appear in mid-summer. He thereby made the offer, which was gratefully accepted, of providing the funds whereby this issue might be published. This number is therefore appearing as a "bonus" to our subscribers and to the Churches which receive it, entirely without cost or obligation to the National Association.

One of the reasons why the Executive Committee had decided last October to recommend that only ten issues be published a year was that many pastors said that during the summer season only a few of those made available for their people were taken. For this reason, only ten copies are being sent to each Church this time. Any Church which wishes a larger quantity may obtain them by writing to the Editor. A supply will be available at the Cheyenne meeting.

Since this is an extra rather than a regular issue, the contents are somewhat different from usual. Several of the regular features are omitted in order that space may be given to the reports on the meetings of the General Council of Congregational Christian Churches and the General Synod of the United Church of Christ, and to certain other special articles.

Attention is called especially to the "Real Questions and Real Answers" on pages 6 and 7, and to the comments on the advisability of Churches which do not enter the United Church of Christ participating in the meetings of the Associations and Conferences to which they have belonged.

Our sincere thanks are given to the layman whose generosity and dedication to the cause of free Congregationalism have made possible this extra issue.

ILLINOIS FELLOWSHIP

A well attended meeting of the Illinois Fellowship of Congregational Christian Churches was held at the La Moille Congregational Church on Saturday, May 20. The meeting was presided over by Mr. Palmer D. Edmunds, the Moderator, and after the singing of hymns under the leadership of Mrs. Edward Warnke of Thawville, Rev. Arthur H. Upton of Thawville led in prayer.

The principal address of the morning session was given by Rev. Harry R. Butman, D.D., pastor of the Congregational Church of the Messiah, Los Angeles, California. His topic was "Congregationalism, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow." The address was most favorably received by all present, and has given rise to a great deal of constructive thought.

Group meetings followed the address, with Mrs. Faye M. Tayler of Galesburg in charge of the women's group, Mr. Edmunds in charge of the men's, and a young people's group arranged by Miss Louise Wilmot of Galesburg. Luncheon followed in the church dining room. Mrs. Donald Noren of Maywood, co-chairman of the Commission on Women's Work of the National Association, was the luncheon speaker.

A forum meeting was moderated by Rev. Ellsworth D. Lyon of the Wataga and Ontario Churches, with discussion on matters of importance. At the business meeting following, officers were elected and other business transacted.

Dr. Howell D. Davies of Chicago, Secretary-Treasurer of the Missionary Society of the Congregational Christian Churches, spoke on the various missionary activities of our Churches, and the closing worship was conducted by Rev. Leonard H. Maunder, pastor of the First Congregational Church of Maywood.

The success of the meeting was due in large part to the Program Committee, Mrs. Faye M. Tayler, Miss Louise Wilmot, Mr. Victor Di Palo, Rev. Ellsworth D. Lyon and Rev. W. Harvey Young.

PENNSYLVANIA LAYMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Hartman Center, Milroy, Pennsylvania was the scene of our Second Annual Laymen's Weekend May 26 through 28. Many of the men attending remembered past weekends when the principles of Congregationalism were expounded at the Center. The thoughts and words of those attending returned the Center all too briefly to its original intent — the search for knowledge of God and nearness to Him by men not ashamed of the Congregational Way.

Mr. Ernest S. Crosby of Buffalo, New York reminded us of our Congregational heritage, pointed out the injustices of a United Church with its amendable Constitution and gave his thoughts and desires relative the National Association. We found Mr. Crosby to be a man "speaking our language." His presence was most encouraging to the Fellowship. We formed an eternal friendship.

The Laymen were guests of Rev. and Mrs. George Wessling and members of White Memorial Church, Siglerville, for Sunday morning service with laymen participating in the worship service.

The Fellowship will hold its Fall meeting at Bethlehem Congregational Church, Duquesne, Pennsylvania, October 14 at 2:00 p.m. A "Newsletter" containing a more detailed account of our work and plans is being prepared for future publication. Any correspondence should be directed to Elmer Meyers, Secretary, 844 Coulter Road, McKeesport, Pennsylvania.

THE CONGREGATIONALIST is published and circulated monthly except July by the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches of the United States.

Rev. Joseph J. Russell, 61 East Street, Melrose 76, Massachusetts, Eastern Field Representative and Editor. Rev. Neil H. Swanson, Jr., Executive Secretary, 176 West Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee 3, Wisconsin.

Change of address notices, undeliverable copies, orders for subscriptions and other mail items should be sent to the Editor, 61 East Street, Melrose 76, Massachusetts.

Subscriptions $2.00 a year, Sponsoring Contributions, $5.00 or more a year. Club rates, 10 or more subscriptions, $1.00 each a year.

Remittances to the order of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches may be sent to the Editor or to the National Association's Milwaukee office.

Second class postage paid at Boston, Massachusetts.

TWO CONNECTICUT MEETINGS

The Women Organize

The organization meeting of the Connecticut Fellowship of Continuing Congregational Women was held at the South Church, Hartford, on the afternoon of May 31. Mrs. Warren S. Archibald was temporary chairman. After a devotional service led by Mrs. Frank W. Reinhold of Watertown, the chairman explained the purpose of the organization. This is to furnish a place of religious fellowship for individual Congregational women and for the women of the continuing Congregational Churches, and to give opportunity to women who believe in the Congregational Way to bear witness to their faith in the free local Church.

Eighty-seven women from various parts of the state registered their interest. Mrs. Myron Bunnell of Norwich presented the program of Youth Work, Mrs. Henry David Gray the Religious Education material, and Mrs. William Schmitz of Allegan, Michigan, a member of the Commission on Women's Work of the National Association, presented the missionary program.

Officers were elected: Mrs. Henry Valentine and Mrs. Warren S. Archibald, co-chairmen; Miss Hilda Camp of Waterbury, Vice-Chairman; Mrs. Marcus L. Henry of Hartford, Secretary; Planning Committee, Mrs. Frank W. Reinhold, Watertown, Mrs. Leon Wilcox, Waterbury, Mrs. Frank Burton, Old Saybrook, and Mrs. Willard L. Bowne, Harwinton.

The next meeting will be held in October, with morning and afternoon sessions.

Connecticut Congregational Fellowship

The annual meeting of the Connecticut Fellowship of Congregational Christian Churches was called to order soon after the adjournment of the Women's Fellowship meeting. A devotional service was conducted by Rev. Granville Greenwold of Winsted.

The Secretary's report concerned the two Executive Committee meetings held since the September meeting, and it was voted to approve the election of Dr. Roy G. Pavy of Chester as Executive Secretary. Dr. Pavy then gave a report on his activities. The Treasurer's report was received and ordered placed on file.

After a report by the Moderator on his speaking activities on behalf of continuing Congregationalism, Rev. Howard E. Munson of Springfield, Massachusetts, spoke on the two young people's conferences to be held at Camp Wachogue, Stafford, Connecticut in July. He suggested as desirable goals for youth work the development of a training course for officers, a good advisers' program, more opportunity in the local Churches for participation by young people, and a greater Christian concern within family life.

Reports on plans for the National Association Annual Meeting were given, and Mrs. William Schmitz of Michigan spoke on missionary activity.

Dr. Arvel M. Steece spoke on devotional materials and Rev. Joseph J. Russell about THE CONGREGATIONALIST and other publications. Much interest was expressed in reviving the Congregational Clubs of past years.

A slate of officers was presented by Mr. Richard Gregson of Norwich, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, and they were elected: Moderator, Dr. Henry David Gray, Hartford; Vice Moderator, Mr. James W. Sherman, Thompsonville; Executive Committee, Rev. Myron R. Bunnell, Norwich, Rev. Stanley Albanesius, Colebrook, and Rev. Alan B. Hutchinson, New Fairfield.

After a dinner served by the South Church women, and the singing of familiar hymns led by Mr. Frederick Kohler of Essex, the evening session convened. Rev. Myron R. Bunnell and the choir from United Congregational Church, Norwich, conducted the devotional service, and after the Moderator's address, the meeting closed with the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, conducted by Dr. Gray and Mr. Bunnell.

THE PILGRIM HIGHWAY

Officially named "The Grand Army Highway," Route U.S. 6 might well be known as "The Pilgrim Highway." Starting from Provincetown, Massachusetts, where the Pilgrims first landed and where, as their little ship lay at anchor in the harbor, they signed the famous "Mayflower Compact" this highway wends its way 3533 miles across the continent to Long Beach, California, where one of the newest of the free Congregational Churches was organized on June 29, 1960.

This Church, starting with 28 members has since increased to 42, and meets in the Woman's Club building of Long Beach. At the recent meeting of the Directors of the Missionary Society affiliated with the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches, Southern California observers were quoted as saying that this Church meets a real need in the community.

THE PHILADELPHIA MEETINGS

The Editor of THE CONGREGATIONALIST attended the meetings of the General Council of Congregational Christian Churches and the General Synod of the United Church of Christ, held in Philadelphia June 29-July 7, for the purpose of presenting to the readers of this periodical a first hand account of both meetings. The impressions here recorded are his own and may or may not have been shared by others.

The General Council

A Friendlier Spirit

The first impression of this meeting was that of a spirit with marked contrast to that which had been noticeable at most previous Councils since 1946. The bitterness and sarcasm so conspicuous at these meetings were conspicuous by their absence here. Even when a mere half-dozen Continuing Congregationalists rose to record their votes against the resolution to transfer the functions of the General Council to the General Synod of the United Church of Christ and the motions to amend the By-Laws so as to make the General Council a phantom body, there were no audible guffaws or snickers at the small number compared with the overwhelming majority.

No doubt many reasons could be given for this changed atmosphere. Among them, this writer believes, were the uncompromising but irenic words of the Chaplain, Dr. Howard Conn of Minneapolis. Dr. Conn made it clear that he did not approve the actions slated to be taken, but in pointing out that we are all disciples of the same Lord, he said, "Some are going into this union from high idealism, some reluctantly, and some by reason of principle are not going in at all."

When the "enabling resolution" was before the meeting, Dr. Henry David Gray, Rev. Erwin A. Britton, and Dr. Conn made brief statements. Typical of these were the words of Mr. Britton, who said in part:

> "It would appear, whether we desire it or not, that some parting of the ways is at hand. Here and in the days to come I am concerned about the spirit in which we act toward one another. On far too many occasions in the past we have, in the heat of conflict, said things to and about each other which were unkind and uncharitable. I hope none of us carries that attitude into the future. We ought to have — at the very least — as much concern for one another as we have for our fellow-churchmen in the Methodist and Baptist and Presbyterian Churches. Indeed as men and women nourished by a common tradition we ought to have more, however sharp and critical our disagreements have been.
>
> "It took a generous spirit for Paul to write to the Church at Philippi, 'Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from good will. What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice.' I believe upon all of us is laid the obligation to pray, not that those differing from us shall come to see things in our way, but that each of us in his own way and through the Churches in which he may be called to serve, may effectively glorify Christ. Anything less is unworthy; anything more is unnecessary."

Sadness at Parting?

It appeared to this writer that in marked contrast to some of the preceding Councils there was little enthusiasm for what was being done. May it perhaps be that however great the idealism which prompted many, some of the rank-and-file Congregationalists who have unquestioningly followed their ecumenically-minded leaders have now, as they think of the demise of the General Council, and as they part from their brethren who from principle are not going into this union, are saddened at the prospect? In any case, it is sincerely to be hoped that the prayer urged by Mr. Britton, as reported earlier in this article, will be fulfilled in the attitude we have toward one another.

The United Church General Synod

When the third General Synod of the United Church of Christ convened on July 3, still another attitude and spirit was in evidence.

There was, happily, none of the bitterness and sarcasm, but neither was there concern over the "parting of the ways" or any evidence that the spokesmen for the United Church of Christ believed that if each of us in his own way proclaimed Christ, anything more would be unnecessary.

Zeal for Conformity Never Dies

The only concern expressed for the 1793 Congregational Christian Churches which, with their 324,520 members, have not become part of the United Church of Christ, was the oft-expressed desire to see all of them eventually brought into the new communion. In view of the spiritual heritage of which both the uniting denominations are proud, from those who suffered as heretics and non-conformists in generations long gone by, it seems strange that the new church showed, on this occasion, so little recognition that those of today who refuse for conscience's sake to conform are their brother-Christians and partakers of the same heritage.

The days of heretic-hanging and imprisoning those who stand by their own beliefs have, happily, gone by. But zeal for ecclesiastical conformity seems to be as strong as ever.

A Statement From Dr. Herbster

Upon Dr. Herbster's election as President of the United Church, the Editor of THE CONGREGATIONALIST asked him if he would care to make a statement to the Congregational Christian Churches remaining out of the union. Dr. Herbster proved to be very friendly and courteous, and his statement is printed herewith:

> "The United Church of Christ sends
>
> GREETINGS IN THE NAME OF THE LORD.
>
> It will be a matter of profound sorrow if ultimately there is a single church which does not hold fast to its fellowship with the great body of churches which have hitherto expressed their substantial unity in faith and purpose. The General Synod of the United Church of Christ has voted 'to extend to the Congregational Christian

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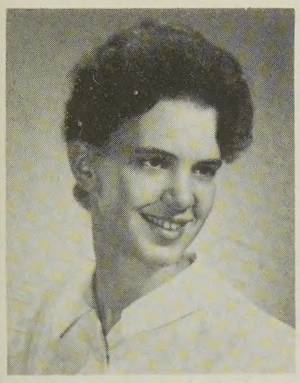
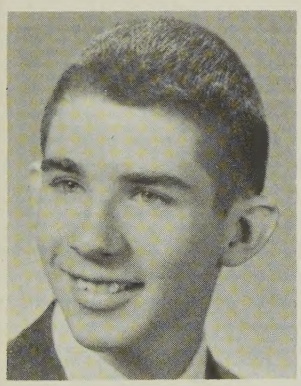
Congregational Young People Receive Scholarships

It has come to the attention of THE CONGREGATIONALIST that at least three young people from National Association Churches have been awarded special scholarships by which they are to go on to higher academic studies. Readers who know of other young people from our Churches who should be included in such a list are requested to notify the Editor, giving the names of the persons, the colleges which these awards make it possible to attend, the conditions of the scholarships, the names of the Churches to which they belong, and other pertinent data.

Miss Lela Jeanne Giles, a member of the First Congregational Church of Marshalltown, Iowa, present Great Plains Representative of the National Association Pilgrim Fellowship, and a member of the second work camp of 1961 at Piedmont College, has received a scholarship to attend Upper Iowa University, where she will begin her work this Fall. With an unusually good scholarship record at Marshalltown High School, she was chosen for the Jean Seberg award in "Masque and Dagger," as the outstanding student for four years in drama and speech work. Mrs. Carl Rick, a trustee of the college, is the donor of the four year scholarship. Lela Jeanne will continue her study in the field of drama and speech, and her many friends in the Pilgrim Fellowship and elsewhere foresee for her an excellent future.

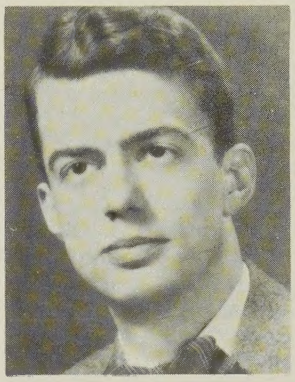


Robert E. Brown, a member of the Winthrop Congregational Church of Holbrook, Massachusetts, has been given one of five awards in the nation for full tuition at Marietta College in Ohio. This award is made on the basis of character, high school record, recommendation of the principal, and the aptitude tests of the College Entrance Examination Board.



Robert joined the Church in Holbrook in 1957 and has always been a faithful attendant and is recognized as one of the outstanding young people in both Church and school. We all congratulate him and look forward to hearing of his making an excellent record at Marietta.

Richard French Wilcox, a direct descendant of one of the original settlers of what is now Fall River, Massachusetts, and a member of the First Congregational Church in that city, will enter Brown University in September as a National Defense Fellow with a scholarship for three years of graduate work in the Department of Religious Studies.



A graduate of Admiral Billard Academy in Connecticut, the Massachusetts Maritime Academy, and Andover Newton Theological School, he is now serving the West Dighton Congregational Church and was ordained in his home Church in Fall River on June 11.

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Churches which for any reason delayed becoming part of the United Church of Christ, every courtesy, every evidence of our sincere desire for Christian fellowship with them and every service of the boards, instrumentalities and agencies of the United Church of Christ.'

We shall do everything in our power to implement this resolution. We stand ready, as you may give us opportunity, to serve and work with you, at any time, in the service of our Lord and of His Church."

Signed: Ben M. Herbster, President of
The United Church of Christ.

COURT DECISION TO BE APPEALED

The report given to the General Council meeting in Philadelphia that the action of Judge Edward A. Dimock in dismissing the complaint of the pro-Congregational Churches and members has "finally and conclusively established the legality and validity of the union" has been called in question by a number of spokesmen. The words uttered on the floor of the General Synod meeting by a lawyer who holds a high office in the United Church, that "the lawsuit is still wide open" show that the confidence expressed by others is not universally held.

The Court dismissed the complaint on June 15 after over ruling all efforts of the attorneys for the pro-Congregational Churches to present a great mass of evidence showing that the Constitution and By-Laws are not only un-Congregational but desert and overturn the guarantees in the Basis of Union. This action of the Court has been described as "a trial without a trial." Future issues of THE CONGREGATIONALIST *will keep its readers informed of future steps.*

Ministers: Attention, Please!

In accordance with instructions issued by delegates attending the Annual Meeting in 1959, ministers were requested to submit at each Annual Meeting one or more of their sermons given during the year. This becomes of great importance at this time in assisting our lay preachers in their early struggle for sermon material, and as an aid to laymen in churches without pastors, in presenting a Sunday message to their fellow worshippers. We ask that each minister forward to the Milwaukee office copies of some sermon he feels to be helpful in such cases. The number of copies would be determined by the minister's available facilities. Please mail as soon as possible to the Commission on the Ministry, 176 West Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee 3, Wisconsin.

WHAT CAN A NO-VOTING CHURCH

The questions stated below are, in substance if not in exact wording, questions which have been asked by officers or committee members of Congregational Christian Churches which have voted against becoming parts of the United Church of Christ, or which have postponed action on the issue for the present and have thus remained outside of the new denomination.

Among these questions many are natural ones, showing the concern of the people of our Churches for carrying on their work in the best possible manner. For various reasons, those who have been bearing the responsibilities in the several departments of Church life have not realized in any great degree that to continue as Congregationalists and not go into the United Church does not deprive them of any of the help they have been accustomed to getting, but rather opens the way for them to receive help from new sources.

The answers to the questions as stated here have been prepared with a view to helping our people to see and understand what facilities are at their disposal, most of them provided by the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches of the United States and its various Commissions. It should be understood that these services of the National Association are not limited to its member-Churches, but are available for helping any Congregational Church or the organizations within it, according to its needs.

Question I. What Shall We Do With Our Benevolence Funds? One member of a No-voting Church expressed it this way: "The time for us to send the Benevolence Funds received into our treasury during the first six months of the year is almost upon us. We don't know what is the best thing to do."

Answer: A Church which is not becoming a part of the United Church of Christ is free to make such use of its Benevolence Funds as it deems most desirable for the Christian cause. If it has certain favorite missionary projects which it has been helping in the past, and it wishes to continue to help them, it is free to do so.

If, however, the Church has customarily sent its Benevolence Funds in a lump sum through the State Conference to be divided as the Conference has voted, and the Church thinks it best to discontinue this practice because it believes that this means putting money to uses which are hostile to the Congregational Way, the Missionary Society of the Congregational Christian Churches (affiliated with the National Association) provides an excellent alternative.

This Society will supply to any Church or Society or Committee which desires it, information about some truly Congregational missionary projects at home and abroad. These include, in the homeland, helping new Congregational Churches to get started in communities where there is need for them. Already several such Churches have been organized, in five states, and others are making plans.

Homeland projects include also Piedmont College, a worthy institution providing educational facilities for young men and women in the mountains of Georgia and other southern states who would otherwise find it difficult to secure the academic training they need.

In the overseas field, support for the work spontaneously started by Chinese Christians among the millions of refugees in Hong Kong and Formosa is one of the chief interests of the Missionary Society. This unique and highly important work is the outgrowth of Christian missionary effort carried on in China by American Board missionaries in days past. Another important overseas work is help for the South India Congregational Churches which face a hard struggle to remain free.

The general funds of the Missionary Society are dispensed by vote of the Directors for these and similar good causes. We suggest that you write to The Missionary Society, 176 West Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee 3, Wisconsin, for further information. *Whatever you send for missionary purposes through this Missionary Society goes 100% for missions, none of it is used for administrative purposes along the way.*

Question II. Where Shall We Look For Our Materials For Christian Education? This question is often asked regarding the courses to be taught, and also regarding visual aids and other auxiliary materials.

Answer: The answer is found first in the fact that Congregational Churches are free to choose materials from any source which they think provides them with the kind they can use best. Churches differ in many ways and to say "This is what you should use" would do more harm than good.

The Commission on Christian Education of the National Association has made an excellent start on something far better than giving directions as to what to use. The preparation of charts telling important facts about the material offered by various publishing houses, both denominational and commercial, has been completed for the Junior High and the Nursery Departments, and others will be made soon. Classified under such headings as "Basic Approach," "Use of the Bible," "Pedagogical Emphasis and Approach," "Social Emphasis," "Polity Position," "Program Areas," "Curriculum Materials," "Audio-Visual Materials," "Comments on Usefulness for Congregational Christian Churches," and "References," the courses available from twelve different publishing houses are concisely described. The use of these charts can be of great help to ministers, Church School Superintendents, and Committees on Christian Education in the Churches.

In addition to these charts, supplementary material suitable for use in Primary Grades on "Our Congregational Heritage" have been prepared, and for Senior High and Young Adult use, an outline for the study of "The Congregational Way of Life" by Arthur A. Rouner, Jr. is now in process of preparation.

A listing of slides and filmstrips suitable for this auxiliary study is being prepared also.

The Commission on Christian Education consists of Rev. Robert H. Scanland, 600 North Garey Ave., Pomona, Calif., (chairman); Mrs. Henry David Gray, 221 Girard Ave., Hartford, Conn., (co-chairman); Mrs. R. E. Disselhorst, 1226 Madison Ave., Burlington, Iowa; Mr. Laurance E. Frost, 151 Maple St., Brooklyn 5, N. Y.; Rev. George W. Brown, Jr., 21 June St., Fall River, Mass.; Mrs. Max Strang, 1109 W. State

Some Real Questions and Real Answers

St., Marshalltown, Iowa; Miss Louise Wilmot, 690 Jefferson St., Galesburg, Ill.; Mrs. George R. Berkaw, Jr., 16516 Cherrylawn, Detroit 21, Mich.; and Rev. George C. Weekley, 50 Ascan Ave., Forest Hills 75, N. Y. We suggest that those wishing more detailed information write to the one of these nearest at hand. Copies of the Curriculum Charts may be obtained from Rev. Neil H. Swanson, Jr., 176 West Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee 3, Wisc.

Question III. Where Can We Look For A New Minister, When We Need One, If We Are Not In The United Church? This question arises partly because the promoters of the union have thrown out various hints to the Churches which arouse their fears in this respect. It is no wonder that the Churches which have decided not to go into the United Church are doubtful about this matter.

Answer: One thing which should be understood at the start is that it is not easy and for many years has not been easy, for a Church to find a minister who is thoroughly suited for its special needs. This difficulty is not limited to Churches of the Congregational order. Many a parish in many a denomination has experienced the difficulty. And the number of vacant Churches throughout Protestantism is testimony to the seriousness of the problem. It would therefore be folly for anyone to say that Congregational Churches remaining free will find it easy to get the ministers they want. But it would be equally foolish to say that they cannot find them at all.

In free Churches as in those of all kinds, certain requirements are inevitable if satisfactory ministers are to be found. High as the ideals of a man may be about sacrificial service for the Lord, his family still has to be fed and clothed, he needs books, he needs a dependable car, and he naturally wants to educate his children.

It behooves any Church, then, which wants a good minister, to provide for his maintenance in a satisfactory way.

And it behooves a Church so to establish a reputation for itself as one of which any man may be proud to be the pastor, so that possible candidates will not "shy off" from it.

Granting these obvious requirements, a Church which remains Congregational may find help by turning to the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches. At the Milwaukee office (176 West Wisconsin Ave.) Rev. F. Willard Kime is well equipped to provide Churches which request his help with information about available men. Working in cooperation with him, the Eastern Field Representative, Rev. Joseph J. Russell, 61 East St., Melrose 76, Mass., has likewise a supply of information about ministers available for Churches in the New England area. As state and regional fellowships spring into being, they too will cooperate in this field. An example of this is already to be found in the appointment of Dr. Roy Gilmour Pavy as Executive Secretary of the Connecticut Congregational Christian Fellowship. From his office at Main and Buckingham Sts., Hartford 3, Dr. Pavy has already begun his work of helping free Churches in this important matter.

Question IV. What Can We Do About Youth Work? Although many of the State Conferences have assured the Churches which have not entered the United Church that their young people may continue to attend the Summer Youth Conferences maintained by the Conferences, many Churches question whether they want their young people to attend these and be subjected to teachings to the effect that the ecumenical movement is the truly Christian way of progress toward better understanding and a greater church life.

Answer: To meet this need, the Commission on Youth Work of the National Association has already carried out programs of weekend rallies and summer conferences at which teen-agers from our Churches may find inspiration and fellowship which will encourage and strengthen their Christian lives. Readers of THE CONGREGATIONALIST have probably learned of much of this work as recounted on the Pilgrim Fellowship pages.

The young people themselves are publishing a quarterly "Echo of Faith", giving suggested topics and helps for regular Sunday evening meetings and telling about the opportunities for these special gatherings. This is edited by the young people themselves, with Larry Rancourt, 1 Kerr Ave., Adams, Mass. as Editor. Subscriptions to this youth paper @ 25¢ a year should be sent to him. Other information about National Association Pilgrim Fellowship work may be obtained from Rev. Paul G. Pitman, 132 Golf Lane, Burlington, Iowa, Chairman of the Commission on Youth Work, or from the National Association offices at 176 West Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee 3, Wisc.

Question V. Where Can We Get Devotional Materials? Many Congregational Churches have used the Devotional Booklets prepared by the Commission on Evangelism and the Devotional Life of the General Council.

There are of course many other excellent booklets such as "The Upper Room," and those published by various denominational agencies. For the National Association, Dr. Arvel M. Steece, First Church of Christ, Old Saybrook, Conn., a member of the Commission on Publications, has been working on a list of desirable devotional booklets. Those who are interested may make inquiries from him.

* * *

These pages do not pretend to exhaust the possibilities of inquiries for material to be of help to the Churches. They deal only with some of the most frequent questions which have been asked. The Commission on Women's Work does a great deal to meet the needs of the women's organizations of our Churches, especially through its book, "Stimulating Suggestions," which may be obtained from our Milwaukee office. Further suggestions will be offered in future issues of THE CONGREGATIONALIST.

FELLOWSHIP FOR CONTINUING CHURCHES

Rev. Neil H. Swanson, Jr., Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Our Congregational Churches come now to a period of confusion and of tension. Whereas they have been in fellowship with one another, a large number of them have now decided to join a new denomination.

As Conferences and Associations of the United Church of Christ are organized, it seems inevitable that the nature of the fellowship among Congregational Churches will be changed. Even though this problem were to be approached in the finest atmosphere of Christian good will, there would be a considerable amount of tension.

Our Churches have encountered a fork in the road. Some have veered off in a new direction. Some will continue along in a basically similar direction. We hope that both roads will lead to the achievement of basic Christian goals. But it must be recognized that they are different roads.

I have been asked, in view of this situation, what advice can be given to Churches which have decided not to join the United Church of Christ. What should their relationship be with their old Associations and Conferences, particularly when these become organizational parts of the United Church? Should they endeavor to maintain a "fellowship" relationship with an Association of the United Church? Or should they create some new form of fellowship with sister Churches which are not going to join the United Church?

In short, what kind of fellowship should a continuing Congregational Church endeavor to achieve?

Several Opportunities Open

Because the individual circumstances vary from one area to another and from one Church to another, I would not presume to suggest a general pattern for every Church. However, I have thought deeply about this problem, and I would like to share some of my thoughts with you.

It is perhaps obvious that the first thing I would propose is that a continuing Church should consider the possibility of becoming a member of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches. The National Association is composed of local Churches. Each Church has a direct vote in all meetings of the Association. By relating itself to the National Association, a Church can share in a nation-wide fellowship of Congregational Churches which intend to remain Congregational. It can participate in a vigorous program of missions, Christian education, women's work, youth activities, publications, and the ministry. It can do all of this without the necessity of changing any of its present affiliations. The National Association provides a fellowship for continuing Congregational Churches in addition to any of their existing relationships.

However desirable a national fellowship may be, it does not solve the problem of what to do at the state and community levels.

At The Local Level

My first suggestion here is that it might be advisable for a Church to continue as a member of its present Conference and Association as long as it can conscientiously and practically do so. A Church's "conscience" will be tested in the degree to which the Conference and Association participate in the United Church. Meanwhile, the practical problem of being in a minority, out of sympathy with many activities of the organization, continually in conflict with what may be an insensitive and aggressive majority, may become intolerable. But if there is any genuine fellowship, a Church may wish to maintain contact.

In some cases, Churches may wish to remain in a Conference or Association until matters relating to ministerial standing, annuities, and grant-mortgages are fully clarified — although it is my present judgment that there is no basic problem in regard to any of these considerations, whether or not a Church stays in a presently existing Conference or Association.

In some cases, Churches may wish to remain in a Conference or Association in order to make it possible to claim the organization for the continuing Congregational Churches if an effort is made to take them into the United Church.

Area Fellowships Needed

However, it is my basic suggestion that those Churches which do not intend to participate in the United Church of Christ should move immediately to develop regional and area fellowships. What such fellowships are called and how they are structured makes relatively little difference. The important thing is to create an organization of like-minded Churches so that there may be mutual consultation on common problems and a fellowship free from confusion and tension. Such organizations can provide opportunities for young people, for women's groups, and for laymen. They can give courage and inspiration to those committed to the Congregational Way.

Churches which participate in such area and regional fellowships of continuing Congregationalism need not pull away from other affiliations. Some Churches will find it possible to keep contact with the old organizations for a longer period of time than will others. This decision should be up to the local Church. But there is no reason why area and regional fellowships should not be organized immediately.

In some areas a great deal has already been done along this line. In other areas existing organizations can be modified. But in many areas someone needs to take the initiative to form new groups.

My advice to a continuing Congregational Church? Maintain present relationships as long as it is conscientiously possible, or as long as it is in any way desirable to do so. But move immediately to find fellowship with like-minded Congregational Churches.

On the national level, consider membership in the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches. On the local level, participate in a group which is already in existence, or share in the formation of a new organization.

I hope it is clear from what I have said in this article that there will be adequate opportunities for fellowship for a Congregational Christian Church which desires it!

If you want information about fellowships of continuing Congregational Churches in your area, please write to Neil H. Swanson, Jr., 176 West Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee 3, Wisconsin.

OUR DEVOTIONAL COLUMN

Rev. Arthur A. Rouner, Jr., Newton, Massachusetts

"A HYMN FOR YOUR FAITH"

My purpose in our devotions this month is to suggest one of the great Christian hymns that can help us in our faith. There may be some, of course, who feel that they have no problems with the faith, that they have nothing more to learn, that they have arrived. And yet, my experience is that there are a multitude of others who, in their hearts, know only too well, that they have not arrived: that their efforts to really be Christians and to follow the Master have fallen far short of the mark, and that they most definitely do need help, and encouragment, and guidance.

Have you ever stopped to think what it was you really said that day when you became a Christian, and joined the Church so long ago? Have you thought what it meant that you were going to give up your old life — to give up all the old habits, all the self-centered thinking, all the anger and unkindness, all the fears and failings — and be a new person?

Have you thought what it meant that you promised to live Jesus' way: to preach the Gospel in your life, to feed the hungry, and clothe the naked, and heal the sick, and to sacrifice yourself in order to save others? Have you thought how sacred and binding those vows were that you took that day, and how poorly you have lived up to them?

It is a terrible responsibility we have taken upon ourselves, and if we are at all honest we know we are unworthy. And yet we have promised, and there is One who has pledged Himself to help us: to give us the courage that we lack, to make us strong when we are weak, to make us able to do what is right when we would rather do what is wrong, and to give us faith when our faith is all but gone.

If you sincerely want His help, Jesus will stand beside you and walk with you to give it. If you could say it to yourself or even sing it aloud, this hymn might help you:

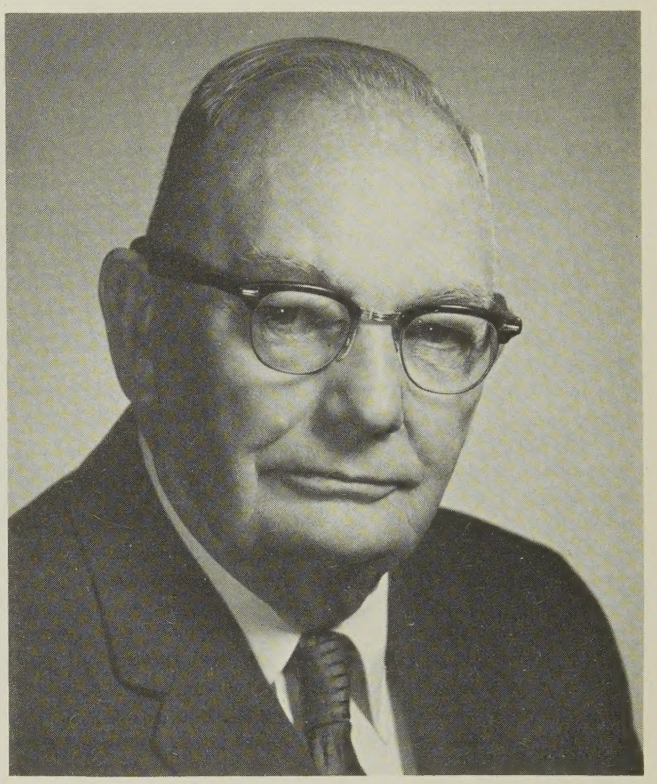
"O Jesus, I have promised to serve Thee to the end;
Be thou forever near me, my Master and my Friend,
I shall not fear the battle if Thou art by my side,
Nor wander from the pathway if Thou wilt be my guide.

"O let me hear Thee speaking in accents clear and still,
Above the storms of passion, the murmurs of self-will;
O speak to reassure me, to hasten or control;
O speak, and make me listen, Thou guardian of my soul."

PRAYER: Lord Jesus, we have promised to serve Thee, and humbly today we ask Thee to take us back and be our Guide. Help us to start again, today, to live the Christian life. If we have failed in our obligation to worship, lead us back to our Churches this week. If we have compromised with the world, let us dare even to be persecuted for Jesus' sake. Amen.

"SEE YOU IN CHEYENNE"

This is the hope expressed by many Congregationalists as they greet one another in person or in correspondence on the eve of the Seventh Annual Meeting of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches. As this issue of THE CONGREGATIONALIST goes to press, there is every reason to hope that a large and enthusiastic number of people will attend this meeting, the program for which was published in our June issue.



(Photo by Apgar, Marshalltown, Iowa)

Dr. Max Strang, Moderator

The folder sent out from the Milwaukee office lists four "Program Highlights" as reasons why this meeting will be especially significant. The first is **Fellowship,** the opportunity to meet with people from all parts of our country who share our common concerns. The second is **Information,** to hear reports from the Moderator, the Executive Committee, and the work of our Commissions. The third is **Inspiration,** the renewal of strength through worshipping together and hearing sermons and addresses by truly great leaders. And the fourth is **Decisions,** the opportunity to discuss problems and propose plans, each member-Church having a vote in making the decisions which result.

The business meetings will be presided over by the Moderator, Rev. Max Strang, D.D., pastor of the First Congregational Church in Marshalltown, Iowa. The host pastor is Rev. Leslie G. Deinstadt, who will conduct the Communion service on Wednesday morning.

The entire personnel of the program indicates strength and uplift during the three days, August 22-24, 1961. No wonder we hope that the wish will be fulfilled, "We'll See You In Cheyenne."

RURAL NEW HAMPSHIRE CHURCH STATES REASONS FOR NOT VOTING ON THE CONSTITUTION

The members of the United Church of Cornish, after long and careful consideration, have decided unanimously not to vote on the question of joining the United Church of Christ, or on the question of adopting its Constitution.

The Cornish Flat Church on a Summer Sunday

The United Church of Cornish, which is the complete organic union of two local Churches, Baptist and Congregational, and which is naturally interested in Christian unity has made this decision for the following reasons:

1. There is not much point in the local Church voting on a Constitution which can be changed or amended without its vote. Is it not a peculiar situation that a Church by its vote abdicates its right to vote on a similar matter in the future?

2. The members of the United Church of Cornish believe that the By-Laws of the United Church of Christ are a part of the Constitution, and equal to it "in force" to "define, regulate and describe." Therefore the By-Laws should be equally subject to approval by the local Churches.

3. The members of the United Church of Cornish believe that a Constitution should be adopted in the same way by all Churches concerned. Therefore, the local Evangelical and Reformed Churches should be entitled to vote on its adoption.

4. Members of the United Church of Cornish understand that other mergers are being considered which would require alteration of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ. Therefore, to vote upon the present temporary Constitution would be a futile accomplishment.

5. The United Church of Cornish, having members both favorable and opposed to the new United Church of Christ, does not wish to fracture its own fellowship by requiring them to take sides against each other.

6. The cause of Christian Unity is not served by making an issue of an overall Constitution, or an elaborate organization, which divides us into two lists: Churches voting "YES" and Churches voting "NO", — separating, as it were, the sheep from the goats.

7. The members of the United Church of Cornish, having friendly relations and close Christian fellowship with other Churches and persons, both favoring and opposing the merger, desire to maintain those relations without in any way appearing to "choose up sides," or to indicate that one way is wholly right, and the other totally wrong.

8. The members of the United Church of Cornish, hoping as they do for worldwide Christian Unity are not convinced that a specified organic structure set in a constitutional framework will make such unity or cooperation more attractive to the many widely divergent Christian Church organizations already existing.

9. A Constitution is not necessary to Christian belief, action, or fellowship. The United Church of Cornish has no Constitution but the New Covenant of the Bible, and does not require persons who wish to become members to vote to accept its By-Laws.

10. The United Church of Cornish, being affiliated with both Baptist and Congregational denominations, and having among its membership those who may not wish to become members of the United Church of Christ cannot accept paragraph 10 of Article IV of the Constitution which states: "All persons who are or shall become members of a local Church of the United Church of Christ are *thereby* members of the United Church of Christ."

11. The United Church of Cornish cannot accept paragraph 15d. of Article IV of the Constitution, which designates as a local church composing the United Church of Christ: "Any local church which, after this Constitution is declared in force, may be accepted into an association or conference of the United Church of Christ." The United Church of Cornish has the inherent right, which it continues to reserve to itself, to affiliate with other associations and conferences without thereby composing, or becoming a member of, the United Church of Christ, or any other body.

12. The members of the United Church of Cornish believe that the time-tested Congregational ways of association and affiliation are sufficient basis for cooperative action. "Can two walk together unless they agree?"

13. The members of the United Church of Cornish do not find evidence that the Holy Spirit is more active in large ecclesiastical organizations.

We pray that the members of our small Church may receive the gift of the Holy Spirit and thus have the power and the courage to serve God in the name of Jesus Christ.

Publication of this statement unanimously approved by vote of the church in regular meeting Wednesday, April 5, 1961.

Wilma G. Barton, Clerk,
United Church of Cornish, New Hampshire.

(*The Pastor is Alvan Barrus, a Licensed Lay Preacher.*)

Glorious Independents

Elizabeth Laughton Claxton
Lansing, Michigan

Tyndale, in defiance of the Pope and Roman Catholicism in England, wrote, "If God spare my life, ere many years, I will cause a boy that driveth the plough to know more of the scripture than thou doest."

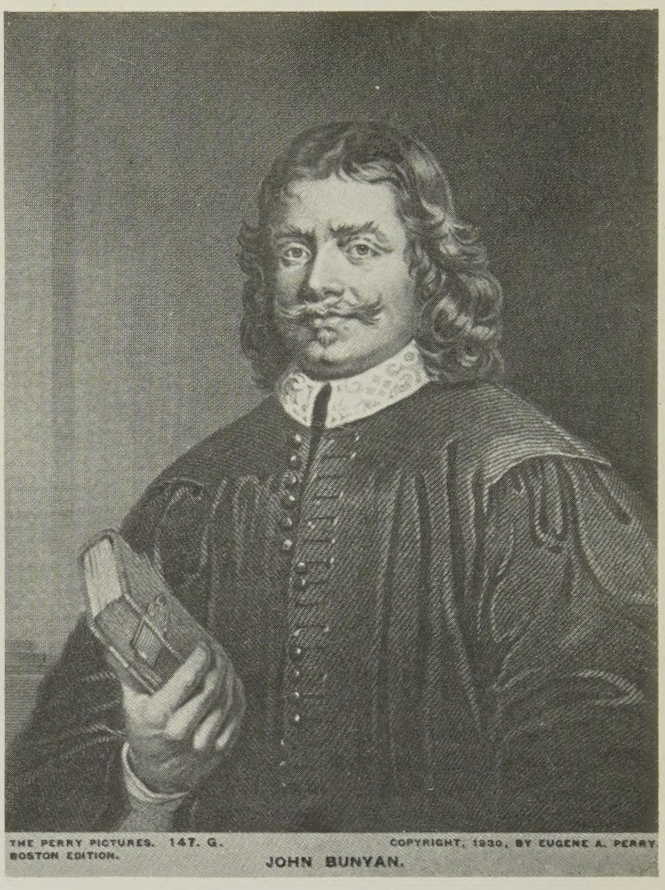
As Tyndale lived to carry out his promise, the Bible became the teacher and text book of the common people. They learned to read, and then to speak and to write, in its splendid idiom and phraseology.

As an important example of a person educated solely by this method we may point to a poor, unschooled boy who was caught by the press gang at sixteen, and forced to be a soldier for three years. This boy was John Bunyan, whose books, *Grace Abounding* and *The Pilgrim's Progress,* the first part of which was written in Bedford jail, show the supreme beauty of thought and expression that could be derived from Bible study.

It has been said, "Truth crushed to earth shall rise again," and history contains many ironies that prove the statement. The participants in any drama cannot know how coming generations may build on their right actions, or balance their mistakes. For instance, Tyndale did not know what a John Bunyan might write. Neither could Bunyan, as he looked at the magistrate Francis Wingate, who sentenced him to Bedford jail, know that this judge had a son who was destined to become knighted the very year that he, John Bunyan, tinker and preacher, would be released from prison, 1672.*

Neither could he know, nor be concerned with the more pertinent fact, that this young man would marry a certain Lady Anne Annesley. It would not have meant anything to him to have been told that Lady Anne was a cousin, once removed, of a young minister's wife, mother of the still unborn famous Wesleys.

History makes these facts interesting only when they are connected with John Bunyan. It was by this son and Lady Anne that the magistrate had three grandchildren who, when they grew up, became members of the meeting house in Bedford where John Bunyan had preached.



*In 1672, when King Charles II issued the Declaration of Indulgence forgiving both Catholics and Protestants who had taken a stand against the Act of Uniformity, the Bedford Church secured a king's license for "John Bunnyon" to be "teacher of the Congregation allowed by us in the House of Josias Roughed, of Bedford, for the use of such as do not conform to the Church of England, who are of the persuasion commonly called "Congregationall.'" (*Quote from the license for* JOHN BUNYON *by R. Winboult Harding, Epworth Press, London, 1928.*)

AN IMPORTANT NOTICE

A recent communication from the Pilgrim Missionary Society has caused some people to be confused. The letter implied that many continuing Congregational groups were uniting.

The facts are as follows. The Central Association, a group of six Churches, is affiliating with the Midwest Fellowship, a group of Churches primarily in eastern Indiana which withdrew about four years ago from the Congregational Conference of Indiana. This combination of the Midwest Fellowship and the Central Association will use the Pilgrim Missionary Society (a creation of the Central Association) as its organ for missions.

While the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches has a friendly relationship with the Midwest Fellowship, and while we believe in the right of groups to organize in any way they choose, we think it should be made clear that the National Association was in no way involved in the combination of these two groups. And further, we want it to be clear that the Pilgrim Missionary Society has no connection with the National Association.

The missions agency of the National Association is the Missionary Society of the Congregational Christian Churches, now located at 176 West Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee 3, Wisconsin. The office of this Missionary Society was formerly at 100 North La Salle Street, Chicago 2, Illinois.

We hope that this statement clarifies the confusion. If you have further questions, you could write to the Missionary Society at its new address.

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NEW ENGLANDERS MEET AND PLAN ORGANIZATIONS

As a result of an invitation sent out by the Connecticut Congregational Fellowship, 15 ministers and 19 lay members met on Friday afternoon, June 16, at the Park Street Church in Boston. These came from four New England states, with Connecticut having 14, Massachusetts 10, Maine and New Hampshire 5 each. After an opening prayer by Rev. Joseph J. Russell, Dr. Henry David Gray served as Chairman and Dr. Roy Gilmour Pavy as Secretary of the meeting.

A large number of subjects were on the agenda, pertaining to the best procedures for contacting all the New England Churches which are not becoming parts of the United Church of Christ; the questions of dual membership or standing; the interrelations between the several groups of continuing Congregationalists; the formation of Congregational Clubs; the future of the ministry; and plans for a New England Regional Meeting in the Autumn.

It was agreed that all the Churches which are not in the United Church of Christ should be informed as to what the National Association is and what it is doing. It was recommended that ministers do nothing about accepting or establishing standing in the United Church, and that the Churches be invited to form Area Congregational Fellowships with provision that membership in them should not prejudice their membership in other Congregational bodies.

It was suggested that ministers register either with the National Association or with their Area Fellowships. The members of the group agreed that conviction should be expressed at every level that the United Church of Christ represents a break in the historic continuity of the Congregational Christian Churches.

Fellowship the Essential

Relative to the various continuing groups it was agreed that all channels of communication should be kept open with all groups, and that there should be strong emphasis on fellowship without attempts at "promotion." The spiritual authority of the Church as the gathered company of Christ's followers, competent to perform all functions of a Church, recognizing the self-completeness of each particular Church but the acceptance of fellowship with all free Churches, was stated as an essential principle.

The formation of Congregational Clubs to encourage fellowships, to be rallying centers, and to set forth the great message of Congregational freedom for our day was approved as one of the most important aims. Each such Club should be encouraged to organize itself, to elect its own officers, adopt its own programs, one of which might well be the gathering of "House-Churches" in as many communities as possible.

The Ministry

It was the sense of the meeting that each Church is the ecclesiastical body competent to ordain, license, or take "in care" men and women for Christian service. Since each Church by its action gives ministerial standing, the principle of fellowship becomes doubly important, and the desirability of inviting sister-Churches to advise and counsel the local Church and extend welcome to those who are "received in care," licensed or ordained. The traditional Congregational attitude in favor of an educated ministry, called of God in conscience and visibly called by a gathered Church to be "pastor and teacher" was reasserted. Mr. James W. Sherman of Connecticut was appointed to look into the question of annuity and insurance coverage for new ministers.

Area and Regional Meetings

In the forming of Area Fellowships it was suggested that continuing Churches in greater New York be invited to consider joining with New England Churches, if they so desire. The various Area Fellowships in New England might well be organized on geographical lines, and each group so organized will be invited to bring its main concerns to a Regional Meeting for further discussion.

The dates for this Regional Meeting were set for Monday and Tuesday, October 16 and 17, and a Program Committee was appointed, consisting of Dr. Roy G. Pavy of Connecticut, who will serve as Chairman, Mrs. Sydney G. Abbot of Massachusetts, Rev. Arthur W. Childs of New Hampshire, Robert B. Easton, D.M.D., of Maine, Rev. Robert Haldane of Maine, and Rev. Joseph J. Russell of Massachusetts.

In Memoriam

Rev. J. Edwin Elder, retired Congregational minister and devoted worker for the cause of free Congregationalism, died in a hospital in Boise, Idaho, on June 18. He was in his 76th year. A native of Kansas, Mr. Elder was an alumnus of Ottawa University and Rochester (N. Y.) Theological Seminary. Having served as a Baptist pastor for several years he became a Congregationalist and served several Congregational Churches in Idaho as pastor and as interim pastor.

Mr. Elder became associated with Dr. Harry W. Johnson in the National Association offices, having charge of pastoral relations. During Dr. Johnson's illness in the Fall and Winter of 1957-58 he did most of the work of the office. His services at the time were most valuable.

Our sympathy goes to Mrs. Elder and their two sons and two daughters, who survive.

* * *

The sympathy of readers of THE CONGREGATIONALIST is extended to our correspondent from London, Dr. Albert D. Belden, whose "From the Old Country" column appears thrice yearly in our paper. Mrs. Belden died in May, 1961, after a long illness.

* * *

Mrs. H. Russell Jay, wife of the pastor of the Congregational Church at Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, died on May 31 at the age of 74. Mr. and Mrs. Jay had been married nearly 53 years. Services were held in Mt. Pleasant on June 2, with Rev. Paul G. Pitman and Dr. E. A. Mathews officiating.